NOTE

This Microfiche meets the quality requirements of the American National Standard for Microfiche of Documents (ANSI PH5.9-1975). However, because of imperfections in the document from which it was made, it contains images that are illegible or difficult to read. The source document for this microfiche is the best copy that could be obtained prior to filming.

CIS Congressional Information Service, Inc
Washington, D.C.

Calendar No. 931

101ST CONGRESS
2d Session

SENATE

REPORT
101-497

SOUTHEAST LIGHT RELOCATION ACT OF 1990

OCTOBER 5 (legislative day, OCTOBER 2), 1990.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. BURDICK, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 3160]

The Committee on Environment and Public Works, reports an original bill (S. 3160) to authorize the relocation of the Southeast Light on Block Island, Rhode Island and recommends that the bill do pass.

OUTLINE OF THE BILL

Section 1 states the title of the bill.
Section 2 defines the term "Secretary".
Section 3 authorizes the relocation of the Southeast Light.

GENERAL STATEMENT

The Southeast Lighthouse is located on Mohegan Bluffs on Block Island, Rhode Island and is in imminent danger of falling into the sea. Constructed in 1873, the Light was illuminated as part of the federal government's effort to ensure safe navigation in Block Island Sound. The Southeast Light is a truly remarkable structure and unique among all lighthouses. This massive red brick structure, of Victorian Gothic Revival style, consists of a double cottage attached to an octagonal light tower. The Light's Fresnel lens, imported from France, is large enough for six people to stand inside. To this day, the Light is considered one of the primary beacons along the East Coast. The Southeast Light has served its mission well and has long been a symbol of New England's maritime history.

In July of 1990, the United States Coast Guard retired the Light and replaced it with a steel tower aid to navigation. According to geology experts, the bluff upon which the Light sits has been erod-

S323-16

ing for over one hundred years. The weakness of the clay sediment cliff in conjunction with rainfall and wave and tidal action constantly wear back the bluff, often at rates approaching seven feet per year. At present, the Lighthouse is approximately sixty feet from the near vertical cliff. The situation is particularly alarming in view of the fact that over forty feet of land would be required to facilitate a relocation of the structure.

Since 1983, a group of Rhode Islanders has been working to save this magnificent landmark. In 1987, the group formed the Southeast Lighthouse Foundation. The primary goal of the private organization is to raise the necessary funds to cost share fifty percent of the total expense of moving the Light from the edge of the cliff. Upon completion of the move, the Foundation envisions the establishment of permanent maritime and natural history exhibits on display and open to the general public at the Light. The State of Rhode Island and private contributors already have expressed their interest in participating in a cost-sharing agreement.

The Committee believes that a cooperative effort among Federal, state and local interests is warranted in order to preserve this historic landmark. According to recent engineering studies, the total cost of moving the Light is approximately $1,940,000, of which the lesser of $970,000 or one half the cost of moving the Light, is to be funded by the Army Corps of Engineers.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is particularly well suited to participate as a partner in this project. As the nation's engineer, the Corps possesses the necessary technical and engineering expertise to undertake the relocation.

The Southeast Lighthouse is the only light in the nation facing immediate destruction. In fact, just this July, the Light was included on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "Eleven Most Endangered Historic Places" list. The Light joins other historic sites such as Antietam National Battlefield and Walden Woods in Massachusetts. It is because of the urgent nature of the situation on Block Island that the Committee reports this legislation.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1

Section 1 titles the bill as the "Southeast Light Relocation Act of 1990".

Section 2

Section 2 defines the term "Secretary" as the Secretary of the Army.

Section 3

Section 3 authorizes the Secretary to relocate the Southeast Light on Block Island to a more suitable location. The Secretary is authorized to be appropriated the lesser of $970,000 or 50 per centum of the cost of relocating the structure.

○